



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE STATE HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR'S REVIEW PROGRAM
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May 10, 2012

TO: Teresa Parsons, SPHR
Director's Review Program Supervisor

FROM: Kris Brophy, SPHR
Director's Review Program Investigator

SUBJECT: Sharon Lotonuu v. Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)
Allocation Review Request ALLO-11-109

Director's Determination

This position review was based on the work performed for the six-month period prior to December 1, 2010, the date DVA HR received Ms. Lotonuu's request for a position review. As the Director's Review Investigator, I carefully considered the documentation in the file, the exhibits, and the verbal comments provided by both parties during the review telephone conference. Based on my review and analysis of Ms. Lotonuu's assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude her position is properly allocated to the Office Support Supervisor 1 classification.

Background

On December 1, 2010, Ms. Lotonuu submitted a Position Description Form (PDF) to DVA's Washington Veterans Home Human Resources Office (WVH HR), requesting that her Office Assistant 3 position be reallocated to the Secretary Supervisor classification (Exhibit A-3).

WVH HR forwarded the request to the agency's central HR office. During that review period the PDF was slightly revised from Ms. Lotonuu's original version (see Exhibit B-4). By letter dated October 13, 2011 DVA notified Ms. Lotonuu that her position was being reallocated to the Office Support Supervisor 1 classification on the basis of being assigned permanent supervisory responsibility for an Office Assistant 3 position within the department (Exhibit B-1).

On November 8, 2011, the Office of State Human Resources Director, OFM, received Ms. Lotonuu's request for a Director's review of DVA's allocation determination (Exhibit A-1).

I conducted a Director's review telephone conference with the parties on April 26, 2012. Present for the conference call were Sharon Lotonuu; Steve Chenoweth, Council Representative, WFSE; Lyn Hofland, Shop Steward; Michael Sanchez, Human Resource Consultant, WVH HR, and Starleen Parsons, Director of Human Resources, DVA.

Rationale for Director's Determination

The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

Positions are to be allocated to the class which best describes the majority of the work assignment. Ramos v DOP, PAB Case No. A85-18 (1985).

Duties and Responsibilities

Ms. Lotonuu oversees and directs a variety of clerical support functions and tasks for the Washington Veterans Home Nursing Services Department. The PDF for Ms. Lotonuu's position states she is responsible for the oversight and coordination of the division (i.e. scheduling) of work within the department. Ms. Lotonuu supervises an Office Assistant 3 position and spends the majority of her time providing office clerical support to the department regarding staff scheduling, payroll, and time keeping processes.

Overall, the duties describing Ms. Lotonuu's position in the original PDF submitted for reallocation (Exhibit A-3) are consistent with those described in the Position Description Form (PDF) used to allocate her position (Exhibit B-4). Ms. Lotonuu's duties and responsibilities are identified in the PDF (Exhibit B-4) as follows:

- 60% Timekeeping and payroll preparation supporting DVA in collaborative manner with agency-wide Nursing Services, staffing and payroll needs, in addition to monitoring Nursing Department budget providing details and trends to DNS and/or ADNS.
- 25% Scheduling of staff on the floors.
- 10% Answers phones and takes messages.
- 3% Support DVA in collaborative manner with agency-wide Nursing Services, staffing and payroll needs.
- 2% Other duties as assigned.

During the review time period Ms. Lotonuu reported to Ms. Marian Lazarus, Assistant Director of Nursing Services (ADNS). During the review telephone conference, Mr. Sanchez stated the ADNS (Ms. Lazarus) assists the Director of Nursing Services (DNS) with the administration and overall management of the Nursing Services department. This includes managing nursing services and direct patient care, program management, personnel administration, budget, policies and procedures, and other departmental functions and services. Ms. Lazarus did not complete or sign the supervisor's section of the PDF for Ms. Lotonuu's position. The parties indicated that Ms. Lazarus did not support Ms. Lotonuu's position review request; however no formal documentation was presented to support that statement.

Summary of Ms. Lotonuu's Perspective

Ms. Lotonuu asserts she performs complex secretarial duties in support of the Nursing Services Department. Ms. Lotonuu asserts she plans, organizes, and establishes spreadsheets and prepares written communication in tracking the departmental workload for the nursing staff. She asserts she developed electronic processes for tracking and reporting overtime, FMLA, L&I reporting, and other departmental information. Ms. Lotonuu asserts she developed and implemented payroll and staffing manuals, forms and spreadsheets to be used by the Office Assistant 3 clerical support and nursing staff to establish consistency and accurate reporting of information. Ms. Lotonuu asserts she develops and prepares specialized HRMS reports for the Director of Nursing Services and the Associate Superintendent of the WVH. Ms. Lotonuu contends her duties include providing overtime and leave information to the ADNS and the DNS to assist them in monitoring the Nursing Services departmental budget.

Summary of DVA's Reasoning

DVA asserts the majority of Ms. Lotonuu's position duties do not meet the requirements of the Secretary Supervisor class. DVA contends Ms. Lotonuu does not perform secretarial duties such as scheduling meetings or making travel arrangements; producing letters, meeting notices and agendas or other documents from rough drafts, notes or recordings; and she does not take dictation or transcribe minutes of meetings. DVA contends the focus of her position does not meet the intent of the Secretary Senior class.

DVA contends the majority of her work involves performing the duties of an Office Support Supervisor 1. This including setting staffing schedules; collecting time sheets, overtime authorization sheets and leave slips and entering timekeeping data into HRMS for processing. Additionally, DVA asserts there is a majority of shared duties between Ms. Lotonuu and the OA 3 position that she supervises including preparing attendance, call-in absences, overtime and other reports, and preparing and maintaining departmental records and databases.

Comparison of Duties to Class Specifications

When comparing the assignment of work and level of responsibility to the available class specifications, the class series concept (if one exists) followed by definition and distinguishing characteristics are primary considerations. While examples of typical work identified in a class specification do not form the basis for an allocation, they lend support to the work envisioned within a classification.

Comparison of Duties to Secretary Supervisor Class

The Class Series Concept for the Secretary series states:

In support of a supervisor and/or staff members, provides secretarial services and assistance for the purpose of facilitating the supervisor's and/or staff members' own work and relieving the supervisor and/or staff members of day-to-day clerical detail. Applies knowledge of supervisor's and/or staff members' work commitments including status of projects and nature of contacts. Secretarial duties include making travel arrangements, scheduling meetings, taking notes and transcribing minutes, screening calls and visitors, keeping supervisor's

and/or staff members calendar(s) and committing supervisor's and/or staff members' time.

Secretarial positions facilitate the work of their supervisor, applying knowledge of their supervisor's work commitments, status of projects, and nature of contacts to make commitments for the supervisor's time. In addition, they perform a majority of secretarial duties in support of their supervisor. In contrast, positions in clerical Office Support Supervisor classes supervise staff and oversee clerical support operations.

During the Director's review telephone conference, Ms. Lotonuu clarified that her contact and level of interaction with her supervisor during the review time period was limited. She stated her role as liaison between her supervisor and the nursing staff primarily involves assisting her supervisor maintain the Outlook calendar for tracking the RN 3 supervisor's work schedules, and preparing and providing payroll, overtime, vacation and other information to assist in the administration and monitoring of the departmental budget. Ms. Lotonuu stated she at times prepares items for the ADNS's and the DNS's signatures, and acknowledged that she does not sign documents on her supervisor's behalf.

During the review telephone conference, Ms. Lotonuu also stated that while she occasionally creates agendas, attends meetings, and takes minutes for departmental meetings, this function is not a regular part of her job. She stated that she is occasionally asked by the Director of Nursing Services to prepare agendas and take minutes for departmental meetings. She provided an example of assisting the Director of Nursing Services prepare for a departmental meeting to discuss skin care for wounded patients. Ms. Lotonuu developed the agenda and took meeting minutes. She also stated that on occasion she will prepare agendas and take minutes for payroll or staffing-related departmental meetings.

The Definition for the Secretary Supervisor class states:

Supervise office support staff, interview and recommend selection of applicants, conduct training, assign and schedule work, act on leave requests, conduct annual performance evaluations and recommend corrective and/or disciplinary actions. Positions establish office procedures, standards, priorities, and deadlines and have frequent contacts with clients, the public, students, faculty, staff members from other departments, and management staff.

Positions perform complex secretarial duties such as independently planning, organizing and prioritizing work to meet internal and external deadlines, monitoring and evaluating budget(s) status and initiating corrections, developing travel itineraries, compiling reports, studies, and applications, developing, modifying, and/or maintaining data base management, office record keeping, or filing system(s), coordinating office operations and initiating action to ensure work unit and/or office goals are met. Positions may perform administrative duties as delegated by the supervisor and/or provide and coordinate administrative support functions for a large unit.

Exercise independent judgment to accomplish assignments or solve problems and to develop new work methods, procedures, or strategies or modify existing work methods, procedures, and strategies to solve new or unusual problems.

Work is subject to review at the completion stage to determine effectiveness in producing expected results.

As stated in the Definition, incumbents in the Secretary Supervisor class perform complex secretarial duties such as independently planning, organizing and prioritizing work to meet internal and external deadlines, monitoring and evaluating budget(s) status and initiating corrections, developing travel itineraries, compiling reports, studies, and applications, developing, modifying, and/or maintaining data base management, office record keeping, or filing system(s), coordinating office operations and initiating action to ensure work unit and/or office goals are met. Positions may perform administrative duties as delegated by the supervisor and/or provide and coordinate administrative support functions for a large unit.

The focus of Ms. Lotonuu's position, and her duties as a whole, do not involve performing complex secretarial duties.

Ms. Lotonuu's position does not have the level of responsibility for planning, organizing, and prioritizing the work of the department to meet internal and external deadlines. Her duties are supportive in nature, which include providing staffing and timekeeping clerical support to the operations of the department. Ms. Lotonuu's position does not have overall responsibility for establishing the scheduling framework, and the parameters that her position follows when creating and maintaining the schedule are established by higher level supervisory and management staff. Although she performs her work independently, her position has not been fully delegated the level of authority consistent with the Secretary Supervisor classification.

In addition, Ms. Lotonuu does not have responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the departmental budget. While Ms. Lotonuu tracks and monitors overtime usage, she does not monitor or evaluate budget status or initiate corrections. Her duties include gathering and entering overtime and other staffing information and providing the information to her supervisor, the DNS and others to assist them in monitoring staffing and other costs related to the departmental budget.

Ms. Lotonuu does not develop travel itineraries, and while she supports office operations, she does not have responsibility to initiate action to ensure that work unit goals are met.

Ms. Lotonuu does gather and compile information which is used to prepare and produce a variety of standard HRMS and other internal reports. She also stated that she developed and established internal office record keeping spreadsheets and databases and filing systems to accurately track and report timekeeping and other staffing-related information in conjunction with the agency's "VSSPro" system.

Ms. Lotonuu's position does not have delegated authority from her supervisor to perform administrative duties and/or provide and coordinate administrative support functions for the Nursing Services Department.

Ms. Lotonuu reports to the Assistant Director of Nursing Services, Ms. Marian Lazarus. While she exercises a high level of responsibility and independence in performing a variety of office administration clerical tasks, her duties are best described as providing clerical support to departmental operations rather than providing direct secretarial support to her supervisor. While a portion of her duties at times reaches aspects of work described in the Secretary Supervisor

class, the primary focus of her position, and the majority of her duties as a whole, does not meet the primary intent of this class of providing secretarial supervisory support.

As a whole, Ms. Lotonuu's position does not meet the intent of the Secretary series and the requirements of the Secretary Supervisor class. Her position does not have responsibility for providing secretarial support to her supervisor. The primary thrust of Ms. Lotonuu's position is to oversee and provide support to the clerical operations of the WVH Nursing Services department. The scope of her work is more accurately described by the Office Support series, which focuses on providing office clerical support to a department or other work unit. The Secretary Supervisor class is not the best fit for the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to Ms. Lotonuu's position.

Comparison of Duties to the Office Support Supervisor Series

The Class Series Concept for this series states:

Supervises staff and oversees clerical support operations.

As described by the class series concept, Ms. Lotonuu supervises an OA 3 position and oversees the clerical support operations for the WVH Nursing Services department. Her position is consistent with the class series concept and should therefore be allocated to a class within this series.

Comparison of Duties to Office Support Supervisor 2

The Definition for this class state:

Supervises staff and/or lower level supervisors assigned to a variety of occupational categories or performing a variety of office support functions such as accounting, office support, data entry and inquiry, or word processing. Incumbents spend a majority of time overseeing and coordinating day-to-day unit operations, use independent judgment to accomplish assignments or solve problems, develop new work methods, procedures, or strategies or modify existing work methods, procedures, and strategies to solve new or unusual problems that impact the unit and requester of services, and plan and prioritize work to meet internal and external deadlines..

Ms. Lotonuu's position oversees the clerical support operations for the Nursing Services department. However, the scope of her duties does not reach the higher level and broader scope of responsibility anticipated by the Definition for this class. The Definition states that OSS 2 positions supervise staff and/or lower level supervisors assigned to a variety of occupational categories, or performing a variety of office support functions. Ms. Lotonuu's position does not reach this level or scope of operational responsibility over staff. Ms. Lotonuu supervises one OA 3 position within the Nursing Services department. Together they provide scheduling and timekeeping support to employees within the department.

In addition, OSS 2 positions spend a majority of time overseeing and coordinating day-to-day unit operations, use independent judgment to accomplish assignments or solve problems, develop new work methods, procedures, or strategies or modify existing work methods, procedures, and strategies to solve new or unusual problems that impact the unit and requester

of services, and plan and prioritize work to meet internal and external deadlines. The overall scope of work assigned to Ms. Lotonuu's position does not reach this level of responsibility. The majority of Ms. Lotonuu's time is spent setting staff schedules, collecting time sheets, overtime authorization sheets and leave slips and entering timekeeping data into HRMS for processing.

Therefore, the scope of her work and the majority of her duties as a whole, do not reach the level of responsibility required by the Definition of this class. For this reason her position should not be reallocated to the OSS 2 class specification.

Comparison of Duties to Office Support Supervisor 1

The Definition for the Office Support Supervisor 1 class states:

Supervises staff in a clerical unit and performs the work of the unit. Incumbents have delegated authority to interview and recommend selection of applicants, conduct training, assign and schedule work, act upon leave requests, conduct annual performance evaluations and recommend corrective and/or disciplinary actions. Incumbents review the work of lower level staff and use independent judgment to accomplish assignments, develop or revise work methods, procedures or strategies, resolve problems, interpret rules, policies and procedures, and make recommendations regarding unit budget.

The scope and level of responsibility of Ms. Lotonuu's position, and the majority of her duties as a whole, closely matches the Definition of this class. Ms. Lotonuu supervises the work of an OA 3 employee within the department and performs the work of the unit.

As described in the PDF for her position, the majority of Ms. Lotonuu's work involves developing and maintaining the 24/7 staffing coverage for the nursing department which includes scheduling and daily timekeeping and reporting of attendance of the nursing staff on the floors; authorizing, monitoring and tracking overtime and leave usage, and entering time keeping data into HRMS for payroll processing.

Ms. Lotonuu prepares and maintains departmental records and databases. She develops and prepares a variety of HRMS reports including overtime usage and leave. She develops other internal reports relating to departmental activities including attendance, Hours of Care, Pharmacy Consulting Reports, and other reports regarding departmental nursing and other activities.

Ms. Lotonuu's duties also include answering phones and responding to staff inquiries related to scheduling, timekeeping, payroll and departmental office policies and procedures. She calls and schedules on-call staff to cover for nursing staff vacancies, sick leave, and vacations. She completes the annual vacation schedule, responds to leave and other process and scheduling requests as needed.

Ms. Lotonuu sets up and maintains filing systems for all staffing and payroll documents. She performs complex data inquiry/entry tasks; and clerical and data entry support for the entire Nursing Services staff.

The PRB has also held that "[m]ost positions within the civil service system occasionally perform duties that appear in more than one classification. However, when determining the appropriate

classification for a specific position, the duties and responsibilities of that position must be considered in their entirety and the position must be allocated to the classification that provides the best fit overall for the majority of the position's duties and responsibilities. Dudley v. Dept. of Labor and Industries, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-07-007 (2007).

It is apparent that DVA clearly recognizes Ms. Lotonuu's work and her dedication to the WVH and the Nursing Services Department. However, a position's allocation is not based on an evaluation of performance but rather the majority of work assigned to a position. Therefore, based on the overall scope of her duties, the Office Support Supervisor 1 classification best describes Ms. Lotonuu's position. Her position should remain allocated to that class.

Appeal Rights

RCW 41.06.170 governs the right to appeal. RCW 41.06.170(4) provides, in relevant part, the following:

An employee incumbent in a position at the time of its allocation or reallocation, or the agency utilizing the position, may appeal the allocation or reallocation to . . . the Washington personnel resources board Notice of such appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the action from which appeal is taken.

The mailing address for the Personnel Resources Board (PRB) is P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911.

You may file in person at 521 Capitol Way South, Olympia, Washington. Fax number (360) 586-4694.

For questions, please call (360) 664-0388.

If no further action is taken, the Director's determination becomes final.

c: Sharon Lotonuu, DVA
Steve Chenoweth, WFSE
Michael Sanchez, DVA
Lisa Skriletz, OSHRD

Enclosure: List of Exhibits

Sharon Lotonuu v Department of Veterans Affairs (ALLO-11-109)

List of Exhibits

A. Sharon Lotonuu Exhibits

1. Request for Director's Review from Sharon Lotonuu, received by Office of State HR Director on November 8, 2011
2. DVA Position Control Form dated December 1, 2010 regarding change/update to duties
3. Position Description form submitted by Sharon Lotonuu with employee signature only, dated December 1, 2010
4. Copy of DVA allocation determination letter from Dax Dowling to Sharon Lotonuu dated October 13, 2011

Cover page from WFSE to Michael Sanchez, DVA submitting the following exhibits:

5. December 9, 2010 email from Ms. Lotonuu stating HR issues resolved
6. Email string between Ms. Lotonuu and Michael Sanchez regarding compensation issues
7. Hand-written notes from Ms. Lotonuu documenting exchanges with HR (5 pages)
8. DOP Class specification for Office Support Supervisor 1 with notes and underlining by Sharon Lotonuu
9. DOP Class specification for Office Support Supervisor 2 class specification with notes and underlining by Sharon Lotonuu
10. DOP Class specification for Secretary Supervisor class specification with notes and underlining by Sharon Lotonuu

B. DVA Exhibits

December 6, 2011 letter from Michael Sanchez to Karen Wilcox with supporting rationale for allocation determination, with the following exhibits:

1. DVA allocation determination letter from Dax Dowling to Sharon Lotonuu dated October 13, 2011
2. Washington Veterans Home Nursing Services Organizational Chart dated November 16, 2011
3. Email dated July 26, 2010 sent to (former) HR Director Tammy Wood from Ms. Lotonuu providing information regarding her job duties
4. Position Description form for Sharon Lotonuu's position dated 12/01/2010 (Note: this was the PDF used by DVA for position review)
5. DOP Class specification for Office Support Supervisor 1, (100L)
6. DOP Class specification for Secretary Supervisor (100V)

C. Director's exhibits

1. DOP Class specification for Office Support Supervisor 2, (100M)